

## **MAD Mage by Mouthbreather (scalding\_coolness)**

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**Summary:**

She could never control her powers when she was mad. Her powers were gasoline and anger worked like a matchstick.

And at that moment, she'd been mad.

...

Or the one where El sort of (definitely) flung Max into a car, but vowed to never do it again.

## **1. the straw that broke the camel's back**

### **Author's Note:**

This exists so the 'two girls not being friends because of a boy' trope cannot.

### **Summary for the Chapter:**

There were a lot of wishes she had in her bucket list. Getting thrown into a car wasn't one of them.

Eleven reached the junkyard to find Mike and Max were the only ones there. At first she felt jealousy spur within her like it had six months ago, but then she heard their raised voices and the feeling disappeared.

"The guys might've voted for you, but El and I never wanted you to join!" Mike shouted.

They were fighting again.

"Dustin, Lucas and Will are my friends. I don't care about what you or El think! Just keep your stupid opinions to yourself!" Max yelled in return.

"You're just a screw up like your brother, trying to steal friends!" Mike screamed.

"Don't you dare compare me to him," Max's voice was suddenly low, but carried a lilt of aggressiveness.

She didn't know what screw up meant and it didn't seem like the right time to ask. Eleven shrugged off the frustration of not knowing yet another word as she made her way towards the duo.

"Why? Did I hit a nerve, Max?" Mike asked with a smile in his voice.

"You know what? I'm done," Max said, backing off as she picked up her bag and the thing with wheels.

"Aw, does Billy do that too? Run away like a coward?" Mike asked.

Eleven didn't think he wanted an answer. Mike was being weird.

"You're crossing a line now and you should stop." Max stalled.

"Is that what Billy would say?" Mike asked again.

She saw Max whip around and drop her stuff as she marched up to Mike. Eleven didn't really realise what was happening until Max's fist hit Mike's cheek who made an oof sound as he stumbled back.

Mike was her friend and someone had just hurt him. She felt anger spur within her as she looked at Max and concentrated.

"I said sto-." Max started, but never got to finish her sentence as she flew through the air and slammed into the windshield of a car, breaking it with the impact.

She didn't get back up.

Mike turned to look at where she stood wiping her nose and ran over to give her a hug.

"Are you okay?" she asked as they separated.

"Yes, thank you." He nodded.

She smiled a small smile and looked back to where Max lay.

"Let's just leave her," Mike said as his gaze followed hers.

Was that the right thing to do?

She didn't know. She just followed Mike as they walked side by side and he told the guys through the radio to come to his house instead.

Eleven looked back one last time at Max who lay sprawled in the broken glass.

She felt a bit guilty. Maybe it'd been a bit too much.

...

When Hopper came home, she could tell something was worrying

him. She didn't pry knowing he'd tell her over dinner. They both sat down in front of the table as he pulled the foil off of his plate and she did the same.

"How was your day? Had fun at the yard?" he asked as he took a bite of his chicken.

"We went to Mike's house, instead," she replied, not saying more.

The guilt came back and she got reminded of the 'no TV for a week' that she was going to get if she told him she'd used her powers on someone and it hadn't been a life/death situation.

"Yours?" she asked.

"Eh." He finished chewing. "Neil Hargrove came by saying his stepdaughter sneaked out and hasn't returned. The man's annoying."

"You see her anywhere?" He asked then as he looked up from his food.

Why was he asking her? She didn't go to school and Mike and the boys were her only friends.

"It's that troublesome kid, Max." He added as he saw her confused face.

*Oh.*

*Uh oh.*

She swallowed as she mustered up the courage to tell him.

...

"I'm sorry! She h-hurt Mike and I didn't know w-what else to do!" she explained.

He hadn't taken it well. She'd known he wouldn't and now they were both driving to the junkyard.

"I get that, El! But you slammed her into a windshield and LEFT HER

THERE!" He emphasised on the last part.

"You can't just use your powers like that! God knows just how badly hurt that girl is," he muttered more to himself than her.

She looked down at her lap. She was sorry, what else could she do?

The car came to a stop soon and they both got out. They walked down the path towards the junkyard, shining their flashlights around and it was El who saw the figure lying in the grass.

"There," she pointed before she ran towards it.

She crouched down beside Max who lay on her side with her head facing the junkyard. El turned her on her back and... it looked bad.

"Goodness," Hopper muttered as he crouched beside her.

He patted Max's bloody cheek. She didn't respond.

"Come on," he muttered as he shook her and tapped her cheek again.

Eleven felt her heart beat faster as her palms turned clammy.

*Did I kill her?*

"Hey, kid." Hopper shook Max again and she looked back at Max's bloody face.

Her eyes opened blearily a minute later and met El's.

### **Max's POV:**

She felt something hit her cheek softly and a jolt of pain went up her temple. She didn't want to open her eyes. Her back felt as though it was on fire and her head throbbing painfully. She didn't know when she'd fallen, but her leg was cold and numb. She was sticky, itchy and everything hurt. She wanted to take a hot shower.

Something tapped her cheek again and pain went up her temple once more. She scrunched up her face and begrudgingly opened her eyes.

"Hey, kid." A man's voice said.

Just above her hovered a girl, Eleven, she realised and she remembered what'd happened. She had punched Mike in the face and then felt a floating feeling before her head had hit something painfully and everything had turned black.

There was only one person that could do that. She saw El's remorse stricken face and put two and two together.

*Jerks.*

...

The minute Hopper mentioned a hospital she felt nausea hit her and wanted to gag at the thought of one. White everywhere and the sickening smell of surface cleaner, sickness and death. She was not fond of them.

She'd pleaded the whole way there and not budged when they'd stopped outside said place and so Hopper gave in.

She got out of the car and walked with Hopper's help when they reached the cabin where he and Eleven lived. From the outside it looked quite abandoned, but the inside was the polar opposite. It was stuffed, but it screamed home. She would've let him carry her inside, but her back hurt at the slightest of contact.

"Okay, just settle back. I'm going to go get the first aid. El, help her." He walked her inside before disappearing somewhere around the back of the cabin.

Eleven hesitated before she took her arm and wrapped it around her neck as she walked her to the couch, providing her support. She ignored the urge to snatch it away. She'd have to suck it up.

The groan she was holding in escaped as Eleven lowered her to the couch and Hopper came back with a box of first aid and a bottle of alcohol.

*Oh boy.*

"Take these for the pain and bite on this." He handed her two pills and a piece of wood wrapped in a cloth.

A glass of water followed and she took a big sip before popping the pills into her mouth and swallowing. She hissed as he lifted her leg

without warning.

"Sorry," he apologised as he inspected it.

"It's stopped bleeding so you don't need stitches, but there are some glass shards and I'm going to pull them out, okay? Bite on the wood." He picked up the pair of tweezers soaked in alcohol.

She took in a deep breath before putting the piece of wood in her mouth and leaning her head back lightly, not wanting to see.

She saw him move from the corner of her eyes and squeezed them shut as her leg started to prickle. She couldn't keep in the whimpers and moans that followed and bit on the wood harder as she felt something slide out of her flesh, once, then twice.

Max jerked back and let out a groan as her leg started to burn all of a sudden, biting down on the wood again. Her teeth ached along with the burn and tears prickled the corner of her eyes.

*Screw you, El.*

She wanted the numbness to return. She wished she'd just pass out. A soft dabbing at her leg made her open her eyes and she looked at Hopper to see he was almost done.

She let out a loud sigh of relief when he started bandaging it.

"Hey, kiddo. Go, get that can of Coke from the fridge. It's red." Hopper ordered and Max noticed Eleven's slight hesitation before she nodded and walked off.

Getting her arms and temple cleaned up didn't hurt as much, thankfully. The cuts weren't as deep. She barely even cried when Hopper dabbed it with the alcohol soaked cloth and then went on to put some rainbow band aids, much to her chagrin. Hopper handed her the can of Coke that Eleven had brought, pointing at her head.

*Oh, clever.*

She wanted to cry at the comfort the chilly can provided.

"El, did you see what I just did?" Hopper asked a few seconds later.

She opened her eyes just in time to see Eleven nod.

"Do you think you can do it?" He asked again.

*What? Why?*

She saw Eleven's throat bob before she nodded convincingly once more.

"Good, okay. I uh I'm going to go into the room and you do her back, all right?" He handed Eleven the tweezers and the cloth.

*Oh.*

"Yes, okay." El replied quietly before Hopper left.

*Oh god.*

"Do you need help. To move?" Eleven asked as she came to stand before her.

Max noticed the pause.

She shook her head, lifting herself and turning to the side trying to lift her jacket from her back without irritating her wounds. No way in hell was she taking it off. She groaned as she lifted her leg out of habit.

"Just let me. Please." Eleven pleaded and she gave in.

*That was a first.*

Eleven came to stand before her. Unzipping her jacket before removing her hands from the sleeves carefully. Max held in her breath through all of it. She felt El's hands lift her track jacket from behind and let out the breath as she let her do the work.

She hadn't taken it off completely, just enough for her back to be naked.

Max felt a familiar sensation of the glass being plucked out and let out a small cry as she bit down on the piece of wood and as if that



wasn't enough, she felt liquid being poured over her back and the burn a second later.

*Shit.*

She was whimpering and crying by the end of it. It hurt like a bitch, the burn and the prickling combined. Her back felt like it was on fire once again.

She wiped her eyes as another tear rolled down her cheek.

"I'm sorry," Eleven whispered as she dabbed the cloth over Max's back and blew on her aggravated skin like Hopper had on her leg.

Her guilt had only increased since finding Max in the junkyard. Her back was red and raw and Max was crying. That was the worst part. Eleven had never seen her look like that, she didn't want to.

Max nodded, not trusting her voice as she sniffed. She just wanted to sleep.

It took ten more minutes for El to clean up Max's back and put band aids on the cuts. The same rainbow ones.

She called Hopper after giving Max's back one last look. Hopper gave the redhead another pain killer before he helped her to bed. Max suspected it was El's and a part of her felt bad for taking her bed, but then she remembered why she was even there in the first place and the remorse went away.

"Well, sleep as well as you can, kid," Hopper said as she laid on her side uneasily.

"I'm going to take you to the hospital for a check up-- don't give me that face-- before driving you back to your house in the morning. No objections," he said, leaving no room for her to plead her way out of it.

She nodded. She wasn't looking forward to tomorrow, but stopped worrying about it when Eleven entered the room. Were they both sleeping there?

"Oh and you're bunking in with Miss Bitchin' because we don't have a

lot of space, as you can see." Hopper added before he gave her a small smile.

She hadn't ever seen him do that. He had a comforting smile even though he was most likely doing it make her feel better.

She felt like chuckling she noticed the sorry look on Eleven's face. She had sounded sincere with her apology, Max couldn't be sure, but her heart had gave in right then. She didn't have it in her to hold a grudge against Eleven.

Hopper left the room, shutting the door on his way out and Max looked up at Eleven who stood beside the bed awkwardly. They hadn't said a word to each other after Eleven's apology.

She looked away as she pondered. She didn't really know what to say to the other girl. She had tried to, several times, but eventually everyone stops knocking at a door one won't answer.

Eleven never acknowledged her, ever and the first time she does was to throw her into a car. She wouldn't say she'd seen it coming, but it wasn't surprising. She was so used to people wanting to hurt her, thanks to her douche stepbrother and stepfather. She would've been surprised if El had told Mike to stop being mean, but of course she hadn't done that. Why would she? Max was some random girl who had tried to befriend her, someone Eleven didn't like.

Her life was a tragic comedy, anyway.

"I'm sorry," El said again.

Was it her lucky day or something?

"It's fine." She sighed.

She didn't care.

What else could she say?

'My whole body hurts because of you and so do my feelings. I don't know why you hate me so much, but I wish you didn't because I can't find it in myself to hate you and I don't know why. It's unfair.'

She couldn't say that and it didn't matter, anyway. She didn't care.

"It's not," Eleven said, frustration dripping from her voice.

"Yeah, maybe, but it's all said and done. At least you didn't kill me," she replied as she pulled the covers up.

"I'm not a killer!" Eleven fisted her hands at her side, looking quite upset.

"I know, I didn't say that! But I could very well die in a minute if you wished so," she explained as she closed her eyes.

"Please forgive me," Eleven said as she sat down beside her and the mattress dipped.

"I told you, it's fine," she repeated.

She almost wished they could just go back to ignoring each other.

There was silence in the room for a minute.

"What did Mike mean when he called you a screw up?" Eleven asked.

"You should ask him." She pulled the covers over her head. "Let's just forget today and go to sleep, night," she mumbled.

She was so tired and even Eleven talking to her wasn't enough to make her feel different.

She heard Eleven's quiet okay before drifting off to sleep.

**She wished she didn't care.**

...

The next day Max and Hopper left after the three of them ate breakfast together. None of them had said much. Eleven felt relief after seeing Max looking a bit better since yesterday. She wasn't as pale and didn't have the uneasy look on her face.

She turned the TV off as she picked up the radio Hopper had bought for her after the Snowball. That was when he'd promised not to keep

her away from her friends. It was one of her favourite moments with him. He wasn't like Papa at all.

It was Saturday and Mike would be at home.

"Mike, do you copy?" she called out as she pressed the button and waited.

A few minutes passed and nothing happened so she repeated her actions and sat back, waiting.

"I copy! Over," came his reply a while later.

She smiled at the sound of his voice as she picked up the radio and they talked for quite a while about the others and school, about DnD and the new campaign he was planning. Mike mentioned how Max had wanted to be the Zoomer and Eleven remembered what she'd wanted to ask him.

"Mike? What does 'scru up' mean?" she asked. "Over," she added.

She wasn't used to saying that, but she was trying.

"Screw up? It's like...," she heard him trail off before he spoke again. "It means a mistake! Why do you ask? Over."

"No reason." Her mood dropped and the guilt returned. "I h-have to go now. For food. Bye, okay?" She shut the radio off, not waiting for his reply.

Her and Mike had been mean to Max and Max hadn't said anything to her at all. That made her feel worse.

She wished she'd told Max she wasn't a mistake. She wished she hadn't acted on impulse.

Max's back had looked so horrible, she couldn't imagine how much it must have hurt and worst of all, Max had laid there in the junkyard even after the sun had set. The thought of what could've happened had Max's father not gone to the police station gripped her with fear.

Would she have died? Be gone like Barb and Sarah? Eleven didn't want that for Max. She didn't want to even think of it.

**She wished she'd cared before.**

...

## **2. the straw that bound them together**

### **Summary for the Chapter:**

Eleven has sworn to herself to never throw anyone into a car without thinking twice.

Max thinks getting thrown into windshields could totally be a bucket list wish if the aftermath turns out this nice.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

Because you guys asked for it. I hope it lives up to your expectations.

Eleven must have spent hours thinking of what she was going to say to Max (she'd come up with nothing). Mike had radioed in to tell her they were all meeting up at the Arcade later because they hadn't been there with El before. She wasn't sure if Max was even coming, but when Dustin, Lucas and Will would be there, it was a possibility.

She just hoped her day wouldn't end up getting ruined. There were only two places she was allowed to go to. The junkyard or Will's house, but Hopper had given in after some pleading. She didn't know if he'd do so again. He was not always a big soft teddy bear, but he'd promised not to keep her away from her friends and was keeping his word so far.

She didn't know if Lucas, Will or Dustin knew about what had went down in the junkyard three days ago and that made her nervous. What would they think of her after that? Max could've told them or they could have seen it for themselves by now, but then Mike had mentioned how the redhead hadn't shown up to school so there was a chance that the boys didn't know yet which was just worse. Now she'd be there to see the disappointment and disapproval swim in their eyes. She could just imagine that picture if she thought hard enough.

The mention of Max's absence had worried her at first, but then the image of her back had swirled into El's mind and she'd understood. The boys described school as 'hell except Science with Mr. Clarke' (she still doesn't understand what that means, but they say she will when she joins next year) and they weren't fond of the place. Who could go to school in a state like that?

"So, I just.. say sorry?" she asked Da-Hopper for the nth time.

He nodded with his eyes glued to the road. "And explain yourself and be nice."

"But I apologized. That day and she said it was. Fine," she countered, pausing to gather her words.

She always had to think before speaking and think in between too, but her speech was better than it had been 6 months ago.

Hopper gave her a short side look. "Yeah well, fine doesn't mean find, kiddo."

"Then what does it mean?"

He was confusing her. Did she not know what fine meant?

"Fine is like... halfway okay," he explained gruffly.

"But it's not okay?" She frowned, still unsure of what he was trying to make her understand.

"But it's not okay," he repeated with a nod.

She turned her head away to ponder, not giving him a reply as she looked out of the window and watched green fields pass by. It wasn't uncommon. She never felt the need to fill silence with mindless chatter and Hopper knew that too. Talking like this was almost a routine for the two of them.

She knew what Hopper had just said most likely was right. He almost always was, but she doesn't think she could be mean to Max now even if she wanted to (not that she did). She'd hurt the other girl enough times to make angels weep. Flinging her off of her

skateboard, brushing off her outstretched hand, ignoring her various tries to befriend El, hurling her into a car. Her eyes widened as she realised she had more than just one thing to apologise about. She threw her head back as a sigh escaped her lips.

What had she gotten herself into?

...

Max stood outside the Arcade glancing at the three familiar bikes parked at her left.

Never had she imagined herself hesitating to go past the doors she'd rushed through so many times.

She'd gotten a call from Lucas (since she didn't own a radio yet) saying they were all going to the Arcade. He'd rung many times before and so had Dustin and Will and she doesn't know why she'd ignored their calls for the past three days. Maybe to avoid confrontation, but now they were all going to the Arcade (her favourite place in all of Hawkins) and Max was sick of lying on her stomach in bed for the last three days so she figured, she'd tell them the same lie she'd told her parents and get on with it.

The Arcade always helped her in blowing off some steam, anyway. It was like her own personal punch bag, the only difference being she didn't punch a bag, but buttons instead.

She adjusted her grip on her skateboard and walked up the steps to the doors, ignoring the painful soreness in her leg. Stalling wouldn't stop Will and the others from asking questions she didn't want to answer or the stares she was going to get-- had been getting.

...

"What do you mean you called Max?" Mike asked incredulously glaring at Lucas.

He could care less about the other girl's presence had it not been for El. She tended to grow upset whenever said girl was around and Mike hated seeing her sad (he knew hate was a strong word). And with what had happened, Max would rat him and El out and he could just



imagine her face.

"She's our friend, man," Dustin bit his chocolate bar sneakily.

"She may be your friend, but she's not a part of the party," Mike argued.

Lately they had all been bumping heads a lot and most of the time it was because of Max.

"The party's a democracy, Mike and the votes are three against two," Will stated the obvious.

He didn't understand Mike's apprehension towards Max. What had she ever done? He hadn't had a problem with El joining the party, not that Will had an issue with that.

"Four," Eleven added quietly.

"What was that, El?" Mike looked at her with a soft expression on his face, the way he always has when he speaks to Eleven.

"It's four. Against one now," she explained and he processed that information.

"Or zero against five." His eyes crinkled.

She beamed at him. He always understood her so well.

...

Max wasn't eavesdropping by any means. It was just that when you're standing two feet away from your group of friends and go unnoticed, you can't help, but hear things.

But maybe she was also frozen because

- 1) Mike and El had just agreed to let her into the party.
- 2) Eleven's smile was so terrific.

How could just one simple smile be like that?

She shook her head as if that could make the thoughts go away and

cleared her throat loudly to get the others attention in the hustle bustle of the Arcade.

"Oh, hey Ma-- whoa, holy shit." Dustin's eyes rapidly scanned her face.

"What the hell happened?" Lucas frowned heavily.

There it was. She let out a sigh, her eyes unconsciously falling upon Eleven's guilt stricken face. A familiar emotion on the other girl's face by now.

"I fell from-," she started, but Will grabbed her wrist before she could finish, dragging her away from the group.

"What're you doing?" She snatched her wrist away.

She hated contact.

"Was it Billy, Max?" Will asked quietly so the others wouldn't hear.

She didn't know someone as sweet as him could be capable of looking furious, but in that moment he did.

"What? No!"

"Don't lie, Max. You're part of the party now, you know the rule," he urged.

Well shit. Not two minutes had passed since they'd all agreed to let her in and here she was breaking the most important rule.

"It really wasn't him Will. He's not gotten.. that far yet." She gave him a small smile to make him realise she meant it and walked back towards the rest of the party.

He'd expected the worse, but she appreciated his concern. Will followed her apprehensively.

"I was out skating after dark and fell over rocks." She lied quite convincingly

When one lived with a family like hers, telling lies was a routine.

Her eyes met El's a second later. She was frowning.

The boys gave her and Will odd looks. Most likely because of the way he'd dragged her away before Lucas' eyes met hers.

"And who gave you the genius idea?" Lucas asked with mild anger in his voice.

She paused a second before replying. "Billy was being an ass."

"God, when is he leaving for college again?" Dustin asked sourly.

She knew how he felt. She still remembers the unimaginable amount of relief she'd felt when he'd announced at the dinner table that he was actually going to go to college.

"Soon." She ignored the looks she was getting from Mike and Eleven now.

They didn't know about Billy. Mike knew he was an asshole, but not the whole story. They both didn't know how after a while he'd gone back to his tormenting antics after the baseball bat incident.

"Are you uh doing okay, though?" Mike shuffled awkwardly.

Do I look like I'm doing okay? She wanted to ask, but decided against it, giving him a curt nod instead.

"Can we go spend our quarters now?" She fished out the coins from her pocket.

"Wait."

Max stalled looking at Eleven.

"Can we talk?" Eleven spoke hesitantly with a pleading look in her eyes.

"Uh.. yeah, okay." She nodded, slightly off put by the other girl's odd request. "Here?"

Eleven looked around, noticing the four boys watching the two of them like hawks. "Outside?"

"Fine by me." She shrugged, waiting for El to get moving.

...

Eleven stood beside the wall as Max put her skateboard down, flopping on it a second later and sighing with relief as the ache in her back and leg lessened.

She wasn't sure how she was going to start this conversation, she had just seen the opportunity and taken it.

"Why did you lie?" She didn't understand.

"I like to avoid unnecessary drama when I can." Max replied a little curtly

Eleven pursed her lips unconsciously as she folded her arms and nodded. "How're you?"

"Is that what you brought me out here to ask?" Max frowned.

"No. But I'd. Like to know," she replied.

"I'm fine, thank you." Max drawled out quite formally.

"Fine doesn't mean fine." Eleven stated.

"What?"

"You're not okay." El noted.

"And how'd you know?"

"I just do," she said without giving the redhead a reason.

Silence.

"Can I sit?" She unfolded her arms, almost hovering over the other girl now.

"Huh?" Max squinted as she looked up.

"Can I sit?" She nudged her head towards Max's skateboard having learnt what the thing with wheels was.

"Oh, yeah. Uh, just a sec," Max said as she adjusted her balance and El flopped down before the board could lift in air.

Their shoulders touched and Max curled in on herself inching away a little.

"I have been un-nice," Eleven started.

"Un-nice?" Max asked with barely concealed amusement.

The curly haired girl nodded hesitantly, not understanding Max's question.

"That's.. not a word," Max informed.

"But you understand," she pointed out.

"Yeah."

"What's another word. For.. un-nice?" Eleven turned to the other girl curiously. It almost felt natural.

"Well." She paused for a second. "You could say uh unkind, mean, rude... or offhand."

"How do you know so many words?" Eleven felt.. envy brim within her.

*Envy: the desire of something possessed by another.* How could Max know so many words meaning the same thing? She didn't even know a correct word for being not nice.

A silence followed her question.

"I read," Max replied. "Don't tell the boys that." She added.

She didn't want the nerds to know she was just as much of a nerd.

"Why not?" Eleven frowned.

"You wanted to talk about something, didn't you?" Max turned to look at the other girl.

She scanned the short haired girl's face. What was she playing at?

"I-- yes. Sorry." Eleven apologised.

Max raised her eyebrows, still looking at the other girl.

"I want to apologise." Eleven fiddled with her hands. "I don't really know how to. Hopper said. I should say sorry, but. I don't understand sorry--." She glanced at Max before looking back at her hands. "It's just a word."

Max hadn't ever heard Eleven say so much at once. That made what she'd just said all the more important.

She processed what the girl had just said. It sounded so genuine and something in her wanted to believe El, anyway.

"It is just a word, but it could be more." She nodded, her eyes flitting over the parking lot, but not seeing anything. "If you mean it." She met El's gaze then and didn't look away.

"I mean it. So much." El spoke fervently. "I promise to. Never hurt you again."

"And you mean it?" Max gave her a side glance.

Eleven nodded eagerly like a little child. Max would've found it annoying had she not looked so cute with her curls bobbing up and down.

"All right, then. I'll hold you on to that," she replied coolly.

"What does that mean?" Eleven's face scrunched up with confusion again.

Max let a small sigh escape feeling as though if they were to become friends, this would be their normal. She adjusted herself on the skateboard again, taking the time to think up a definition.

"I mean, I expect you to keep your promise," she replied, frowning. There was ought to be a better way she could phrase that.

"A promise is something you never ever break." Eleven replied in a dead serious tone.

At first Max thought the other girl was joking, but when she saw the expression on Eleven's face, she knew it was no where near a joke. This girl took promises seriously. Max hoped she would never get to see one be broken.

"Uh, yeah. Tota--."

"Especially when there's spit." Eleven interrupted.

"Spit?" Max didn't understand the connection between a promise and saliva.

"A spit swear means you never break your word." Eleven elaborated as she suddenly spat in her hand then took hers and shook it. "It's a bond."

She watched on, catching up a moment too late.

Oh, no. *That* did not just happen.

She still doesn't know why she hadn't screeched with disgust, but Eleven's hand was holding hers. The same Eleven who she was pretty certain despised her.

She was still looking at her slightly wet hand in bewilderment when Eleven spoke up again.

"There's also.. something. Else."

"Nothing including spit, right?" she questioned as she unconsciously folded her arms.

It was safer that way.

Eleven shook her head. "The.. first time we met. Wasn't the first time. I saw you."

"It wasn't?" Max frowned.

Eleven had the capability to confuse her a lot.

...

"If a fist fight happens, who do you think would win?" Lucas stood with his face glued to the window.

"Why are you even thinking that?" Will looked away from the window to frown at Lucas.

He wanted the two girls sitting on the pavement outside the Arcade to become friends already so the tension between the party could dissolve. He didn't like picking sides, especially the one with Mike not beside him.

It'd be so much nicer if everyone could get along with everyone.

"Eleven, obviously." Mike muttered.

"I said fist fight."

"You guys are cra-." Will started.

"Max, definitely." Dustin grinned before frowning. "But it shouldn't happen anytime in the near future. She's pretty beat up right now."

"El doesn't need fists." Mike countered.

What had happened at the junkyard was proof of that. If only the boys knew. Plus, why go through all that trouble when you can do everything with your mind?

"I think if you asked her to not use her po--."

"Guys, look." Dustin interrupted Lucas.

"Should we interrupt?" Will asked.

The two girls weren't sitting beside each other or talking anymore.

He didn't get an answer.



...

"Why did you do it?" Max frowned.

It wasn't like her or Mike were flirting. He didn't even like her like that, he didn't like her *at all*.

"I don't know. I just.. I felt w-weird and. I didn't like it."

Eleven's answer didn't clear up any of her confusion. The girl disappears for a year and somehow sneaks in to the school to see Mike after that, but finds him with her and flips her off of her skateboard. Max couldn't unde-- wait. That was it!

"Oh my god, you were jealous!" Max gushed.

"Jealous?" Eleven wanted to scream because of her limited knowledge of the world and everything in it.

"It's like.. envy, but different." Max looked at Eleven's face for a sign of understanding, but those lines of confusion on her forehead didn't go away.

She wanted to scream out of frustration. Why could she not explain words decently?

"Okay, hold on." She paused. "So, you saw me with Mike and you didn't like that."

Eleven nodded, a frown still etched to her face.

"It could've been because you thought I replaced you. That you should've been where I was. Was it that?"

Another nod.

"Then that's jealousy. You thinking you were replaced or you wanting to be in my place. Get it?"

Finally El's frown dissolved and Max let a small smile slip, suddenly understanding the girl's rudeness. Of course, there was a reason for it.

"Listen, you and me. We're two different people, okay?" She stepped closer to Eleven. "I could never replace you. The boys were all your friends before becoming mine-- well except Mike, but that's beside the topic-- what I'm trying to say is that." She took in a breath. "You have your own place in all of our-- their lives and no one can take that away, you understand?"

Eleven didn't respond at first before she nodded slowly.

"And there's nothing between me and Mike that you have to be jealous because as far as I know, you don't go around punching people you like." She joked.

There was never going to be anything between her or any of the boys for that matter.

"I'm sorry about th-throwi--."

"Say sorry one more time and I swear I'll bang my head into a wall."

"B-bang your he--."

"Goodness gracious, never mind I said that."

Eleven looked more confused than ever.

"Bang my head out of frustration. It's an expression, I'm not actually going to do that."

"Expression?" Eleven's frown deepened.

"Oh, boy." She sighed. "Change of topic. We should get going now, don't you think?" Max bent down slowly to pick her skateboard when Eleven beat her to it.

Eleven's first act of kindness towards her. Maybe getting thrown into a windshield wasn't that bad. Her chest felt lighter.

"Yes. Let's.. go." Eleven smiled. It was an odd sight to Eleven her holding her skateboard, but one she could get used to.

"Do you think you can cheat with your powers?" Max wiggled her

eyebrows suggestively.

"I could try." Eleven gave her a side looped smile.

They both ignored the four boys who ducked when they reached the entrance.

"Idiots." Max muttered.

"Idiots." Eleven repeated.

And had Eleven's powers been different, had she been able to read minds, she would've known that in that moment they were both thinking the same thing.

*Why had they not made up before?*

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

This took a while because I didn't want force myself to write it. That's never fun, so I let the ideas come to me.

Review!

### **Author's Note:**

Hey guys! I'm new here giving writing fanfic a shot. Please leave some feedback!